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Research And Development's Global Role in Force Health Protection

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The Naval Health Research Center Computer
Assisted Rehabilitation Environment (CAREN)
in operation.

I have said throughout my tenure as your 36th Surgeon General that medical research and development is crucial to future capability of our armed forces because, more often than not, our medical innovations derive from an idea or experiment in one of our laboratories. Researchers and scientists epitomize the spirit of interdisciplinary scholarship, innovation, and entrepreneurship that lead to translational advancements in critical areas.

Our global research and development arm is dedicated to enhancing the health, safety, readiness and performance of

Navy and Marine Corps personnel deployed around the world through cutting edge medical research in a wide range of disciplines.

Today we are fortunate to have eight extremely capable Naval Medical Research Centers, Labs, or Units spanning four continents that conduct basic and applied research in infectious diseases, biological defense, combat casualty care, military operational and expeditionary medicine, bone marrow transplantation, aviation medicine and medical standards, and diving and environmental medicine. I am also very proud of the bilateral agreement and Memorandum of Understanding for military medical partnerships we recently signed with the Vietnamese Ministry of Defense which will increase our medical knowledge and capability in the Pacific for the health benefit of both our nations and the entire Pacific Rim.

Here is a quick snapshot of our global medical R&D capability with a summary of their areas of focus.

 Naval Medical Research Center – Silver Spring, Md. serves as our headquarters, focusing on solutions to operational medical problems such as battlefield neurotrauma and wounds, decompression sickness, naturally occurring infectious diseases, biological threat agents and bone marrow injury research.

Navy Medicine Video

Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.



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Naval Health Research Center — San Diego, Calif. works closely with operational units by conducting medical modeling & simulating analysis; monitoring the effects of combat exposure on psychological health; managing career-span deployment health & readiness programs, improving warfighter performance, and assisting in the implementation of military-specific HIV-prevention.

- Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory Groton, Conn. conducts research into undersea human systems integration, submarine survival & rescue, diver bioeffects, hearing conservation, and situational awareness. They work in concert with the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Naval Medical Center San Diego, NASA, NAVSEA, Naval Expeditionary Diving Unit, and the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine and others.
- Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio, Texas conducts medical, dental, and directed energy biomedical research to enhance the health, safety, performance, and operational readiness of Navy & Marine Corps personnel as well as addressing emergent medical and dental problems in routine and combat operations.
- Naval Medical Research Unit Dayton, Ohio conducts research in acceleration effects, aviation medical standards and personnel selection, physiological and cognitive effects of altitude, vision research, pulmonary health effects, neuro-toxicology/ neurobehavior, reproductive health and systems biology.
- U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit 2 Pacific Pearl Harbor, Hawaii conducts infectious
 disease research and surveillance in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Current studies
 include respiratory disease surveillance, malaria drug resistance, novel vector control
 measures and dengue cohort monitoring.
- U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit 3 Cairo, Egypt conducts infectious disease research and surveillance in the Middle East, Southwest Asia, Africa, & Eastern Europe. Current studies focus on influenza-like illness, acute febrile illness, diarrheal diseases, hemorrhagic fever, HIV, meningitis and infection control.
- U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit 6 Lima, Peru conducts infectious disease research and surveillance in South America including prevention strategies, clinical trials, chemotherapeutics, diagnostics, epidemiology, and ecology. Researchers partner with the Peruvian Army and Navy, prestigious universities like Cayetano-Heredia and San Marcos, the Ministry of Health, USAID, CDC, NIH and several American universities.

As part of research studies and directly through funding by such distinguished partners as the CDC, USAID, Department of State and many others, our laboratories provide medical diplomacy through improving civilian public health, infection control, and laboratory capacity building and I couldn't be prouder of their efforts.

While working to enhance US and global public health is certainly an important mission for our research laboratories, their primary mission is maintaining a high state of readiness for our warfighters. Readiness ensures we provide care for our people no matter where they are and no matter the situation they're in.

Our work continues.

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